Appl. No. 09/736,967
Amd. Dated March 15, 2005
Reply to Final Office Action of December 15, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (currently amended): A packet forwarding [[The]] system [[as recited in claim 4,]] comprising:
(a) an interface system for receiving packets and having a plurality of channels;
(b) a plurality of framing service engines; and

(c) a channel manager for assigning channels to ones of the framing service engines, the channel manager being arranged to dynamically assign the channels and configured to receive data about the framing service engines, the channel manager further being configured to assign channels to ones of the framing service engines on the basis of the data, the data including information about utilization of framing service engines, wherein at least one framing service engine is configured to frame packets from higher layer protocols and at least one framing service engine is configured to deframe packets from lower layer protocols.

Claim 7 (original): The system as recited in claim 6, wherein the framing service engines are configured to operate on AHDLC packets.

Claim 8 (original): The system as recited in claim 7, wherein the interface system comprises a plurality of network interfaces terminating a plurality of point to point links.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (currently amended): The packet processing system of claim 34 [[9]] wherein said channel manager that actively allocates framing service engine ones of said plurality

of point to point links requiring framing services dynamically allocates said framing service engine ones of said plurality of point to point links.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The packet processing system of claim 34 [[9]] further comprising a framing memory to buffer communication between said plurality of framing service engines and said plurality of network interfaces.

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (currently amended): The packet processing system of claim 34 [[9]] wherein said plurality of point to point links operate according to PPP and said framing system provides framing services in accordance with HDLC protocol.

Claims 15-33 (canceled)

Claim 34 (currently amended): A [[The]] packet processing system [[of claim 13]] comprising:
an interface system comprising a plurality of network interfaces, said interface system terminating a plurality of point to point links; and
a framing system providing framing services to support said plurality of network interfaces in terminating said plurality of point to point links, wherein said framing system comprises a plurality of framing service engines and a channel manager, the channel manager being arranged to actively allocate framing service engine ones of said plurality of point to point links requiring framing services, and wherein at least one of said framing service engines includes a framing engine and a deframing engine, [[wherein]] the framing engine being [[is]] arranged to frame data packets from higher layer protocols and the deframing engine being [[is]] arranged to deframe data streams from lower layer protocols.